

Appln. No.: 09/803,779
Amendment Dated: June 29, 2004
Reply to Office Action of: March 31, 2004

MTS-3236US

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-16 were originally pending in the application. Claims 14-16 have been withdrawn.

Claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 have been allowed. Claims 1, 4-6, 9 and 11 have been rejected.

Claim Objections:

Claims 11-13 have been objected-to, as being of improper dependent form.

Claim 11 has now been cancelled.

Claims 12 and 13 have been amended, as suggested by the Office Action at the top of page 3.

Section 112 Rejections:

Claims 5 and 9 have been rejected as being indefinite, because their correspondence to the specification is unclear.

Claim 5 has now been cancelled.

Dependent claim 9 recites that the converting means outputs the selected expression, after removing a part of the selected expression into which a class is converted. The class belongs to the previously identified class combination of a selected sentence that does not coincide with the combined class combination, and is not included in the previously identified class combination of the selected sentence that coincides with the combined class combination.

Discussions of these features may be found, for example, in the specification at page 41, lines 4-23. As discussed therein, the second expression, shown in FIG. 7 as an example of the database, of "atsui--miruku" and "miruku--ari" is selected as an output, after removing a part of the selected expression into which a class is converted. Namely, the keyword of "atsui" is removed.

The keyword (atsui) which is included in the selected expression, **does not coincide** with the keywords pairs created by combining the three keywords (aoi, miruku; aoi, ari; and miruku, ari; shown at the bottom of FIG. 7). That is since "Atsui (hot)" is such a keyword, it is removed from "any hot milk?" and a sentence "any milk?" is finally output.

Accordingly, claim 9 finds basis in the specification.

Section 102 Rejections:

Claims 1, 4, 6 and 11 have been rejected as being anticipated by Masuichi. Applicants have now cancelled claims 1, 4, 6 and 11.

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Allowable Subject Matter:

Claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 have been allowed.

Information Disclosure Statement (IDS):

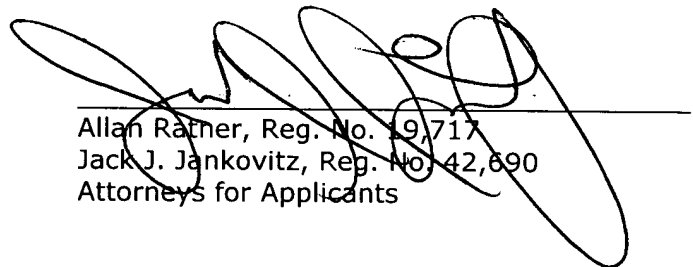
On February 21, 2002, applicants filed an IDS. The Examiner has not acknowledged this IDS. A copy of the filed IDS and a stamped returned postcard are enclosed.

Applicants request that the Examiner acknowledge the copy of the IDS.

Conclusion

Claims 1, 4, 5, 6 and 11 have been cancelled. Claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 10, 12 and 13 have been allowed. Claim 9, which depends from claim 7 or claim 8, is also in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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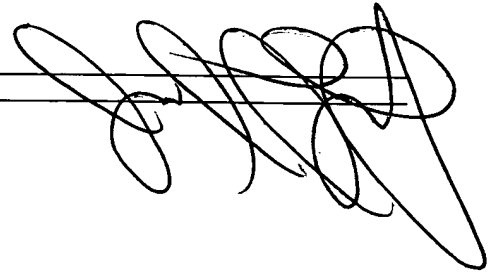
Dated: June 29, 2004

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The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment to Deposit Account No. **18-0350** of any fees associated with this communication.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on:

6/29/04



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